

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund Grants

What are Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation (Section 6) Grants?

Federal assistance to States and Territories to participate in voluntary conservation projects for candidate and listed species; private landowners are important partners.

Conservation Grants provide funds to States and Territories to implement projects such as species status surveys and to develop management plans for candidate and listed species.

Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants provide funds to States and Territories to develop Habitat Conservation Plans through baseline surveys.

Habitat Conservation Planning Land Acquisition Grants provide funds to States and Territories to acquire land associated with approved HCPs. Grants do not fund the mitigation required of an HCP permittee; instead, they support conservation actions by State or local governments that complement mitigation.

Recovery Land Acquisition Grants provide funds to States and Territories to acquire habitats essential for recovery of threatened and endangered species.

Montana: Endangered Species Grants Help Keep “Big Sky Country” Big

“That’s one of the most productive bull trout streams in the country,” said Fish and Wildlife Service biologist Bob Lee of the headwaters of the Bull River in Montana. The area is now a part of almost three square miles of property that belongs to the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, thanks to the support of Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grants.

“The property is associated with Plum Creek Timber Company’s Habitat Conservation Plan for native fish—bull trout and cutthroat trout—and is designed to enhance the conservation effects of the HCP,” said Lee. “We identified parcels that would benefit other wildlife, too—gray wolves, grizzly bears, Canada lynx, and fishers—by providing a travel corridor to unite populations and expand their gene pools.”



Jason Dunham, Boise Forestry Sciences Laboratory, U.S. Forest Service

The grants helped the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks purchase the land from Plum Creek Timber Company, while the Avista Corporation (a utility company) and the Conservation Fund donated a 559-acre conservation easement to match the Federal money. At the ceremony dedicating the area, Mark Elsbree, Vice President and Northwest Director of The Conservation Fund, termed the habitat, protected for grizzly bears, bull trout, and other wildlife “spectacular” and applauded “the confluence of the economic side and environmental side of what’s being done today.” The Conservation Fund helped negotiate the land transfer and provided early funding.

The 1,800-acre Bull River Wildlife Management Area protects a half-mile of frontage on Bull Lake, along with a stretch of the Bull River, wetlands, riparian areas, and upland forests—prime real estate for development but crucial for conserving endangered and threatened species. The area is open to the public for hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, and horseback riding.

*Bull River Wildlife Management Area
Dedication Ceremony*



Courtesy of Don Morgan, USFWS